

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 216269
ORIGIN INT-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 EA-12 PA-02 ICA-20 /054 R

DRAFTED BY INT/DOA/G.MILNER:ICT
APPROVED BY INT/ACTING DOA/G.MILNER
-----103603 250356Z /11

P R 250022Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO HICOMTERPACIS SAIPAN MARIANA ISLANDS PRIORITY 0000
INFO DISTAD MAJURO MARSHALL ISLANDS

UNCLAS STATE 216269

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN TQ

SUBJECT: PRESS RELEASE

DOA NO. 269-TT

1. TO HICOMTERPACIS, SAIPAN AND DISTAD MARSHALLS; PLS
PASS TO BILL GIBSON. HICOM WINKEL, PLS PASS TO GEORGE
CALLISON. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESS STATEMENT ON
BIKINI RETURN FOR RELEASE AUG. 25. THE FOLLOWING STATE-
MENT IS TO BE USED INSTEAD OF THE RELEASE WE TRANSMITTED
ON AUG. 16:

"RELOCATION TO KILI ISLAND OF 145 PEOPLE LIVING ON BIKINI
ISLAND WILL BEGIN AUGUST 27, 1978 (U.S. MAINLAND TIME),
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR ANNOUNCED TODAY.

"(THE MARSHALL ISLANDS ARE WEST OF THE INTERNATIONAL DATE-
LINE. RELOCATION OPERATIONS WILL BEGIN MONDAY, AUGUST 28,
MARSHALL ISLANDS TIME.)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 216269

"IN CONFIRMING THE DATE THE OPERATION WILL BEGIN, UNDER
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR JAMES A. JOSEPH ANNOUNCED THAT
WORK WILL COMMENCE 'FORTHWITH' TO BUILD A NEW DISPENSARY,
A NEW SCHOOL, AN ADDITION TO THE CHURCH, AND AN ADDITION
TO THE CIVIC ASSEMBLY BUILDING ON KILI -- ALL TEMPORARY

STRUCTURES EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN THE FALL OF 1978.

PERMANENT STRUCTURES WILL TAKE THEIR PLACE AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE, JOSEPH ADDED.

"WE HAVE CONSTRUCTED TEMPORARY HOUSING TO ACCOMMODATE THE RETURNING RESIDENTS,' JOSEPH SAID.

"THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING OF OUR COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE FOR THE TOTAL REHABILITATION OF KILI ISLAND. TRUST TERRITORY HIGH COMMISSIONER ADRIAN WINKEL AND WE ARE MOVING TO PREPARE A TOTAL RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM FOR THE BIKINI PEOPLE THAT INCLUDES ADEQUATE HOUSING, PERMANENT COMMUNITY BUILDINGS, AND A DOCK TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE ISLAND.'

"JOSEPH ADDED, 'AFTER FULL CONSULTATION WITH THE BIKINIANS, THE GOVERNMENT WILL DEVELOP PLANS FOR RELOCATION OF THOSE RESIDENTS WHO WISH TO MOVE ELSEWHERE. THE BIKINI PEOPLE HAVE SOME LAND RIGHTS ON NEARBY JALUIT ATOLL AND SOME MAY WISH TO SETTLE THERE.'

"UNDER SECRETARY JOSEPH AND RUTH G. VAN CLEVE, DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF TERRITORIAL AFFAIRS, LEFT WASHINGTON, D. C. AUGUST 4 AND WENT TO KILI TO INSPECT THE TEMPORARY HOUSING AND OTHER FACILITIES BEING CONSTRUCTED THERE BY THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT. THEY THEN TRAVELED TO BIKINI ON AUGUST 11, TO MEET WITH THE ISLANDERS AND ASSURE THEM THAT THE RELOCATION WAS NECESSARY FOR HEALTH REASONS.
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 216269

"BIKINI ATOLL STILL CONTAINS RADIOACTIVE HEALTH HAZARDS AS A RESULT OF NUCLEAR TESTING CONDUCTED THERE MORE THAN 30 YEARS AGO. IT IS PART OF THE MARSHALL ISLAND GROUP IN THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS ADMINISTERED BY THE UNITED STATES UNDER A TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED NATIONS.

"IN 1946 THE U.S. ASKED THE PEOPLE OF BIKINI FOR PERMISSION TO USE THE ATOLL AS A TESTING AREA. THE PEOPLE AGREED TO LEAVE BIKINI AND WERE ULTIMATELY SETTLED ON KILI ISLAND IN THE SOUTHERN MARSHALLS.

"RADIOLOGICAL SURVEYS PERFORMED BY THE U.S. ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION IN 1968 SAID BIKINI WAS AGAIN SAFE FOR HUMAN HABITATION AND PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON ORDERED A COMPLETE REHABILITATION OF THE ATOLL. PLANS WERE MADE TO CREATE A MODEL COMMUNITY ON THE ISLAND AND THEN RETURN THE BIKINIANS TO THEIR TRADITIONAL HOME.

"WHEN RESTORATION WORK BEGAN IN 1970, BIKINI ISLANDERS FROM KILI WERE HIRED TO ASSIST IN THE REHABILITATION

PROJECT. THEY GRADUALLY BROUGHT THEIR FAMILIES AND OTHER RELATIVES TO BIKINI. IT IS THIS GROUP, NOW NUMBERING 145, THAT WILL BE REJOINED WITH THE 400 BIKINIANS ON KILI.

"LINGERING RADIATION WAS DISCOVERED ON BIKINI ISLAND WHEN THE PEOPLE DECIDED IN 1974 TO HAVE SOME OF THE NEW HOUSES BEING BUILT BY THE GOVERNMENT ERECTED IN THE INTERIOR PART OF THE ISLAND.

"SINCE INLAND AREAS HAD NOT BEEN CONSIDERED FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES BEFORE, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO CONDUCT A FULL RADIOLOGICAL SURVEY BEFORE THE START OF INLAND CONSTRUCTION.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 216269

"THE SURVEY, COMPLETED IN JUNE 1975, REVEALED THAT THE INTERIOR COULD NOT BE USED FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES. IT ALSO SHOWED THAT FOOD PLANTS WERE RECYCLING RADIONUCLIDES FROM THE ISLAND'S SOIL.

"FOOD SUBSIDIES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED TO BIKINI RESIDENTS SINCE 1972 AND AFTER THE 1975 SURVEY THEY WERE CAUTIONED NOT TO EAT LOCALLY-GROWN FOODS.

"FISH IN THE WATERS AROUND BIKINI ARE CONSIDERED TO BE SAFE TO EAT, BUT FRUITS, VEGETABLES AND COCONUT FOUND ON THE ISLAND ARE CONTAMINATED.

"IN NOVEMBER 1977 THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT INSTITUTED A COMPLETE FEEDING PROGRAM FOR ALL RESIDENTS OF BIKINI.

"REGULAR HEALTH MONITORING IN APRIL OF THIS YEAR REVEALED AN INCREASE IN THE LEVEL OF CESIUM-137 IN THE BODIES OF SOME BIKINIANS DESPITE THE DIET OF IMPORTED FOODSTUFFS.

"THE POTENTIAL DANGER IS CONSIDERED TO BE MUCH MORE SERIOUS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND SINCE NEARLY HALF OF THE ISLAND'S CURRENT RESIDENTS ARE UNDER 15 YEARS OF AGE, EARLY RELOCATION OF THE ENTIRE POPULATION WAS GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY BY TRUST TERRITORY AND INTERIOR DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS.

"BIKINI ATOLL IS BEING RE-SURVEYED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, USING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY THAT IS SIGNIFICANTLY

MORE ACCURATE AND RELIABLE THAN THAT AVAILABLE FOR THE 1968 AEC SURVEY.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 216269

"THE NEW TECHNIQUE USES GAMMA-RAY DETECTORS MOUNTED ON AIRCRAFT. IT WAS RECENTLY USED TO SURVEY ENEWETAK ATOLL.

"THE AERIAL SURVEY BY DOE BEGAN JULY 31, 1978, AND WILL INCLUDE BIKINI ATOLL AND THE NORTHERN MARSHALL ISLANDS. SURVEY RESULTS ARE EXPECTED BY THE SPRING OF 1979.

"THREE SHIPS WILL SAIL FROM MAJURO TO BIKINI DURING THE WEEK TO TRANSPORT THE PEOPLE AND THEIR POSSESSIONS TO KILI ISLAND.

"REPRESENTATIVES OF VIRTUALLY EVERY MAJOR NEWS-GATHERING ORGANIZATION IN THE U.S., EUROPE AND ASIA ARE ABOARD ONE OF THE SHIPS TO OBSERVE AND REPORT ON THE RELOCATION.

"DEPENDING ON WEATHER CONDITIONS, THE MOVE TO KILI IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY SEPTEMBER 5, 1978."

GEORGE MILNER, ACTING DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF TERRITORIAL AFFAIRS SENDS. CHRISTOPHER

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS RELEASES, POPULATION MOVEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE216269
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ICT
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780347-1077
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780823/aaaaasqv.tel
Line Count: 196
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6251755b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN INT
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1619113
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS RELEASE DOTA NO. 269-TT
TAGS: OGEN, SOPN, SPOP, TQ, US
To: HICOMTERPACIS SAIPAN DISTAD MAJURO MARSHALL ISLANDS
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6251755b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014